AKIRA

36™

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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 36

MIYAKO'S LAST STAND

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

2030. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, onetime leader of a delinquent gang, is caught up in the aftermath of a power struggle between a Japanese military research organization — led by a man known only as the **Colonel** — and a resistance group whose members included **Kay**, **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**.

The **Colonel** once controlled a number of psychic children, each identified by a number marked on the hand. Among them were **Kiyoko** and **Masaru** — Numbers 25 and 27. The blind **Lady Miyako** — **Number 19** — now heads a great religious cult. **Number 41** is **Tetsuo**, who lost his left arm to a laser blast from the Colonel's SOL military satellite, and has used cybernetics and telekinesis to fabricate a prosthetic replacement. **Tetsuo** was Kaneda's dearest friend until he used his burgeoning powers to slaughter other members of their gang. Now, **Kaneda** is out for revenge.

Most powerful of all the children is **Number 28** — **Akira** — a docile and enigmatic boy who was placed in cryogenic sleep almost forty years ago, after he started the Third World War with a mental blast. He was recently reawakened by **Tetsuo**, and again he devastated the reconstructed city of **Neo-Tokyo**. Now Japan exists in a state of emergency. The forces of the army and the resistance are scattered, and the military's formidable caretaker robots patrol the streets.

In the western part of **Neo-Tokyo**, the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed — a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minis-

Kaneda

Masaru

Kai

Lady Miyako

ter. Together the pair use their powers, organizing their subjects into fighting units to defend their land. Their headquarters is Neo-Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. To the east, **Lady Miyako** welcomes refugees to her shrine. In this, she is aided by **Kiyoko**, **Masaru**, and a number of loyal, psychic monks.

The **Empire** is infiltrated by teams of spies and commando units from the outside world, equipped with biochemical armaments which take a tremendous toll on Tetsuo's forces.

A fleet of foriegn ships waits in Tokyo Bay, poised for action. Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists and one Tibetan monk study the **Akira** phenomenom — which they've codenamed Juvenile A. One of the scientists — **Stanley Simmons** goes ashore to implement a secret plan. The research team is certain that using military force against **Akira** and **Tetsuo** can only lead to disaster.

Meanwhile, **Kay** joins Miyako's forces in battle against **Tetsuo**. **Kay** is a powerful medium, through whom the others can project their powers and strike as one.

Kaneda teams up with **Kai** and **Joker** — a rival from his gang days. Using salvaged weapons the trio lead a force of

Tetsuo **Stanley Simmons** **Akira** **Joker**

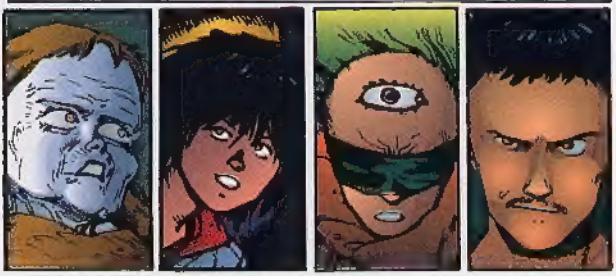
refugees and street rats to help Kay in her battle with **Tetsuo**. As they fight, **Akira** looks placidly on.

Then, the international fleet in the harbor sends fighter planes to rain death upon **Neo-Tokyo**, causing chaos among all the combatants. Enraged, **Tetsuo** teleports himself to space, seizing control of an orbiting laser cannon. He fires the weapon at the fleet, and then brings it crashing down upon the flagship, killing the commanders and forcing mass evacuation of military personnel and the few scientists who survive.

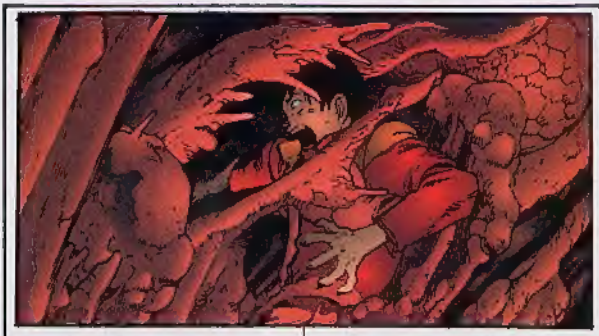
Griefstricken over the death of his gentle girlfriend, **Kaori**, **Tetsuo** carries her body to the underground chamber where **Akira** once slept. Drawn by the similarity of their powers, **Akira** follows **Tetsuo**. Along the way, he is joined by **Kaneda**, **Joker**, **Chiyoko** and **Ryu**. They plan to fight in the bowels of the earth, where many of their comrades died.

Tetsuo's powers have grown erratic. His body frequently bloats and expands, engulfing those who venture too close. For a moment, it seems that contact with **Kaneda** has restored Tetsuo's humanity. Then, his power comes surging back, and Kaneda is drawn into his monstrous form, apparently consumed. As the battle rages, **Akira** becomes more alert. Terrified of what might occur if **Akira** fully awakes, **Ryu** panics. He draws a gun and shoots **Akira**, setting the boy's power free.

Seeking a new power source for himself, **Tetsuo** flies to Lady Miyako's shrine, with **Kay** in hot pursuit. **Lady Miyako** instructs **Kiyoko** and **Masaru** to look after **Akira**,



Kiyoko Kaori Seer Ryu



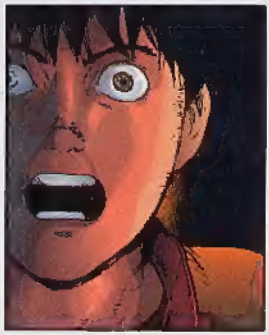
and the pair teleport away to help their friend. **Lady Miyako**, her followers, and **Kay** prepare to make a final stand against **Tetsuo.**

Kiyako and **Masaru** meet **Akira** on the psychic plane, and are joined by the spirits of all the gifted children who have died before, hoping to use Akira's power once more.

Telling **Kay** that the resolution depends on her, **Lady Miyako** heroically draws Tetsuo's attention to herself and is killed. As she dies, she, too, is drawn to the spirit plane, where the souls of friends who have gone before await. **Kay** is guided in battle by her late mentor's commands, and is able to break through to **Tetsuo.** His concentration interrupted, he is vulnerable, and is himself consumed by force from Akira's mind.

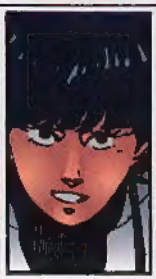
Trapped within Tetsuo's soul, **Kaneda** experiences a fractured, kaleidoscopic journey through his late friend's life and hardships, sharing with **Tetsuo** both the good memories and the bad.

Kaneda is contacted by Lady Miyako's spirit, and is stunned by what she is told. Although **Tetsuo** and **Akira** were created in laboratories, they, and all the catastrophe they bring, are a vital part of mankind's future evolution.



Chiyoko

The Colonel



Kay

Lt. Yamada

AKIRA...
...KI...

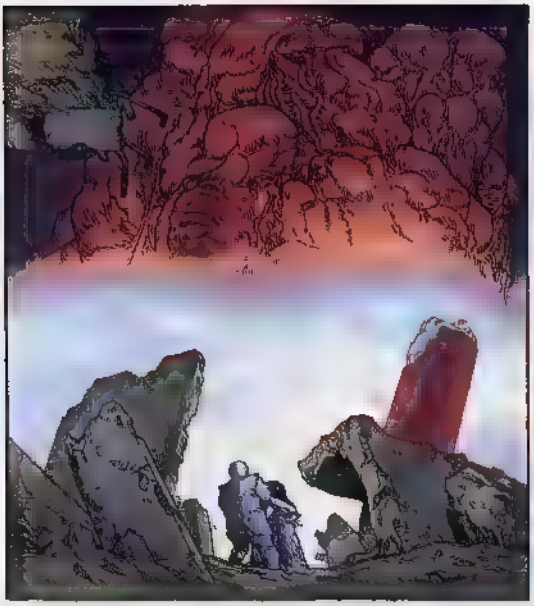
...KI...YO...KO...
AKIRA! YOU'RE AWAKE!
MASARU...
YOU CAN HEAR US, RIGHT AKIRA? YOU UNDER-STAND!

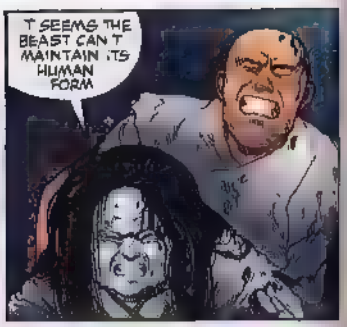
HOW IS TAKASHI...? THE OTHERS..?
ALL RIGHT HERE EVERY-ONE IS HERE.

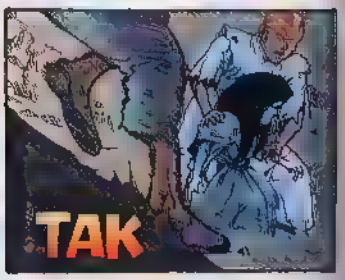
WE'RE ALWAYS TOGETHER, ALL OF US.

CAN YOU USE THE POWER?
AKIRA
UH-HUH...

¡HRRRN!¡E
THAM
MY POWER FADES···!
KAAAAY!

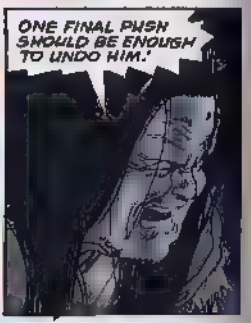


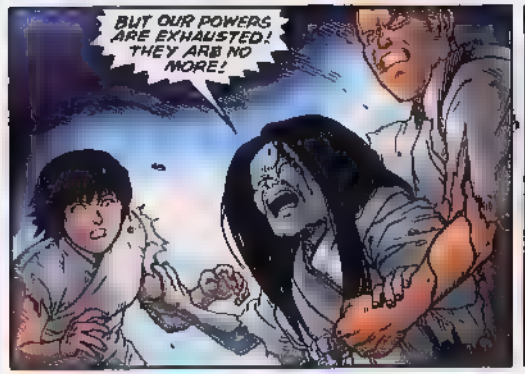

T SEEMS THE BEAST CAN T MAINTAIN ITS HUMAN FORM


TAK

!

LADY MIYAKO!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, KAY. LISTEN.


ONE FINAL PUSH SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO UNDO HIM.


BUT OUR POWERS ARE EXHAUSTED! THEY ARE NO MORE!

ONLY YOURS REMAINS!
IT'S UP TO YOU TO END THIS.

KRASH
IF WE WERE ABLE TO USE YOU, WE MAY YET PREVAIL!
I UNDERSTAND
THEN GO!
ZZZM
AND WHATEVER SHALL BE SHALL BE!
OOOU UUU U!!

BA
BOOOM
OOOOUU!
FOOOM

BADOOOM
RUMMBLE
YAAUGH!

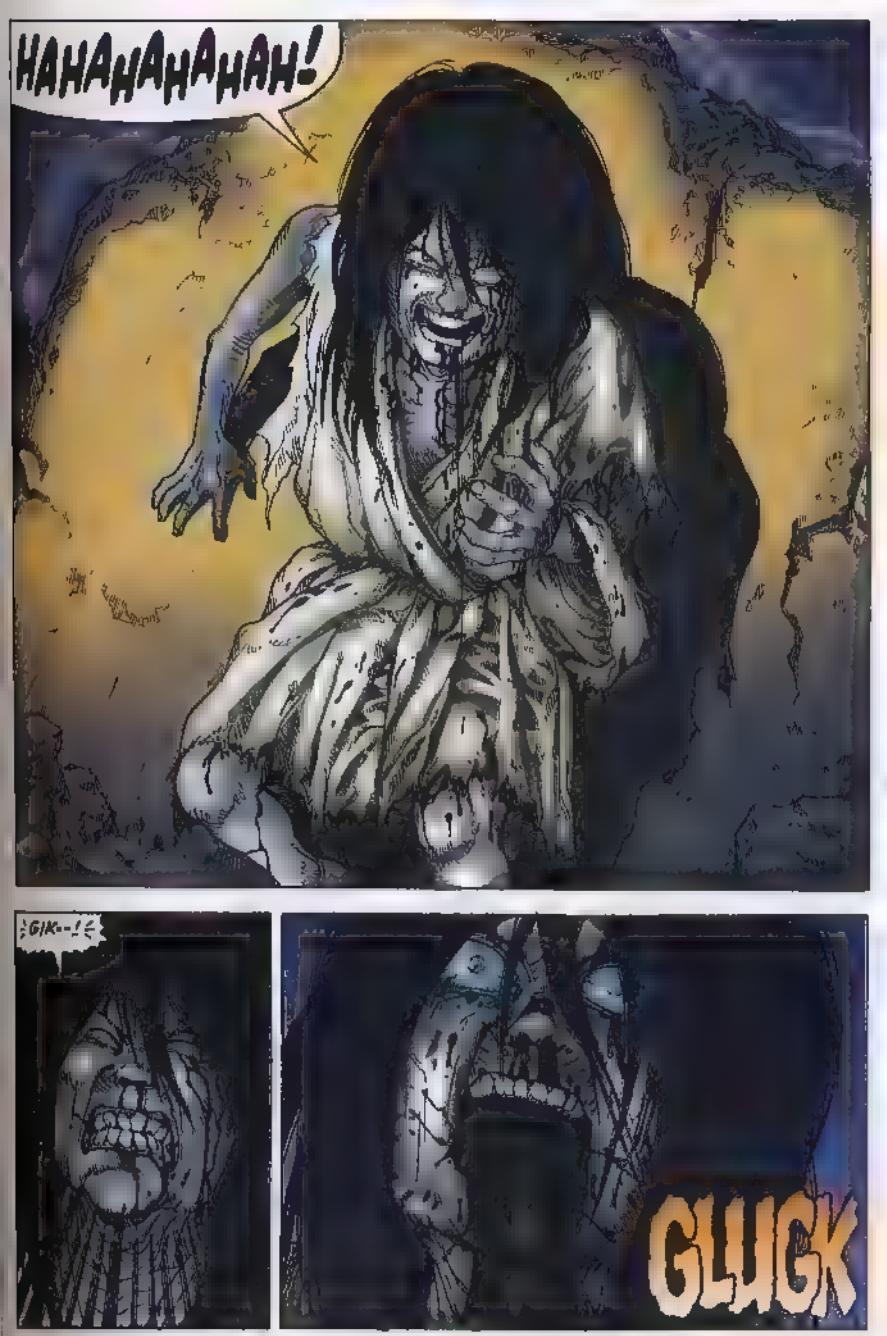
.....
NOT . YET...
TO DIE NOW
...WOULD BE THE COWARD'S WAY.

SOL-

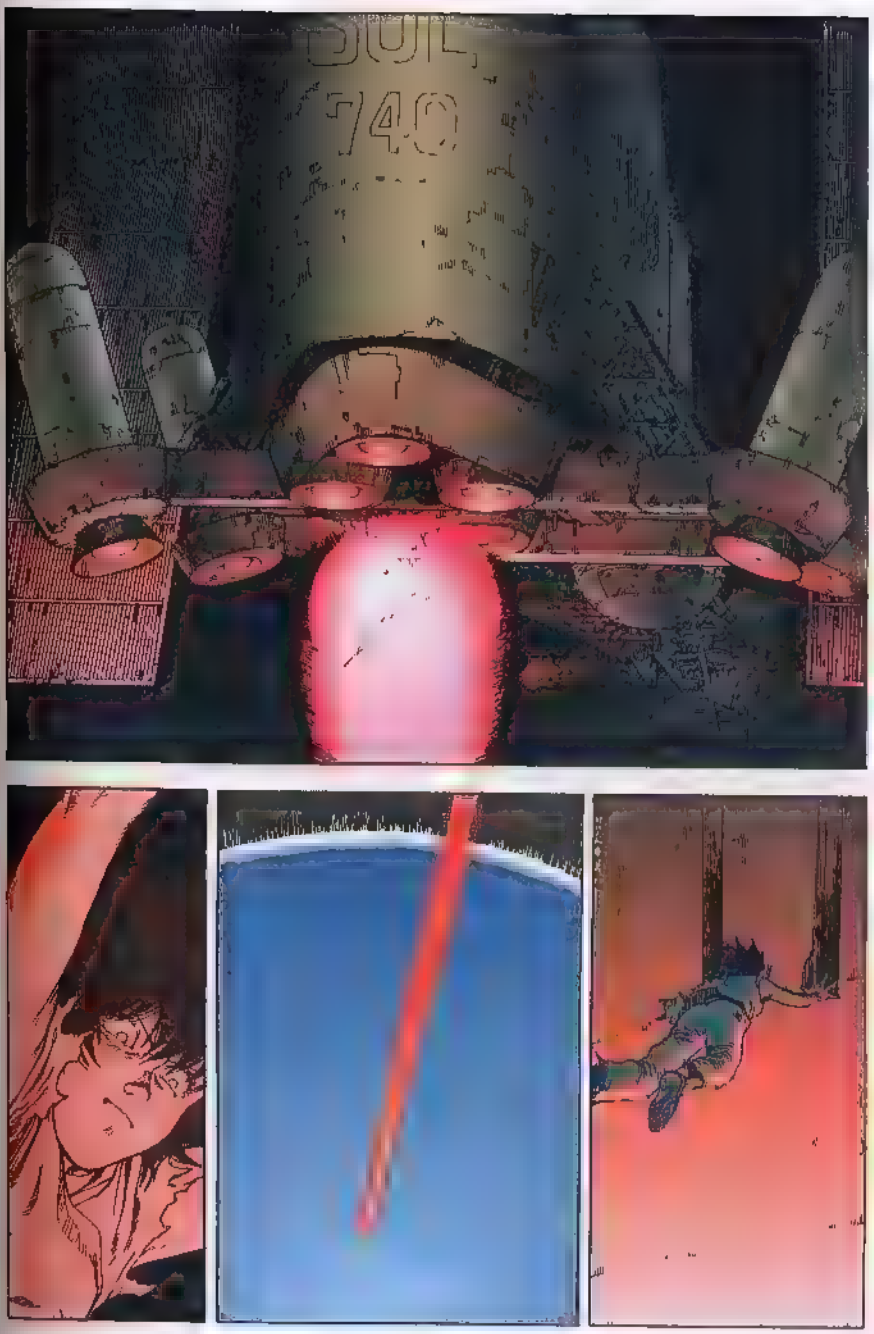
SUH-788
SOL

WHY DO YOU HESITATE?! I'M RIGHT BEFORE YOU!

HAH!
BWASH
OOH!
GLUP


HAHAHAHAHAH!
GIK--!
GLUGK

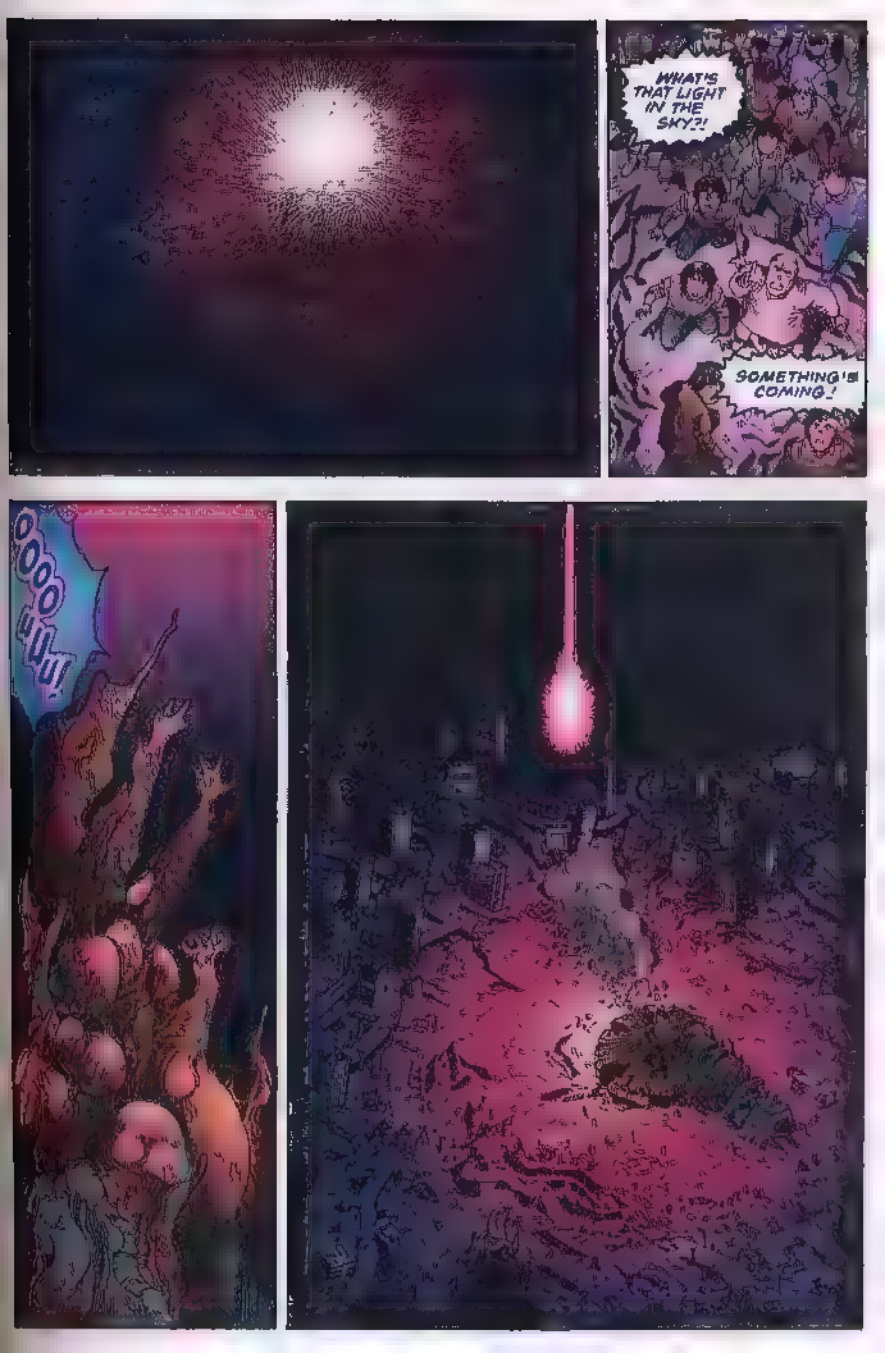
THOP
...SA...KA...KI...
WHUD
SSSHF

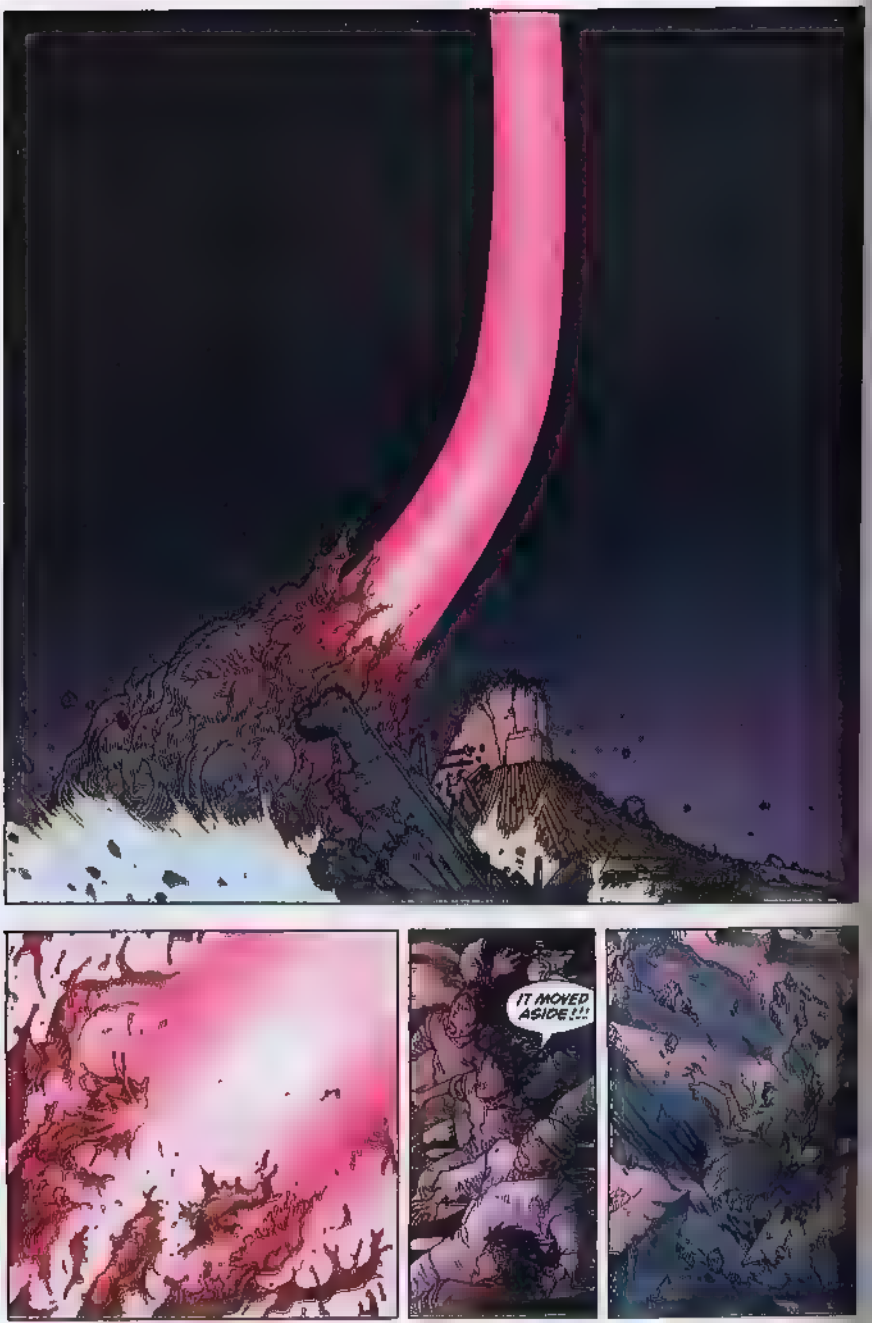


SSSS

OOOUUU!
...KAY...
DIRECT IT TOWARD ME
I'LL GUIDE YOU..
WHERE I LIE..
...YOU MUST STRIKE!

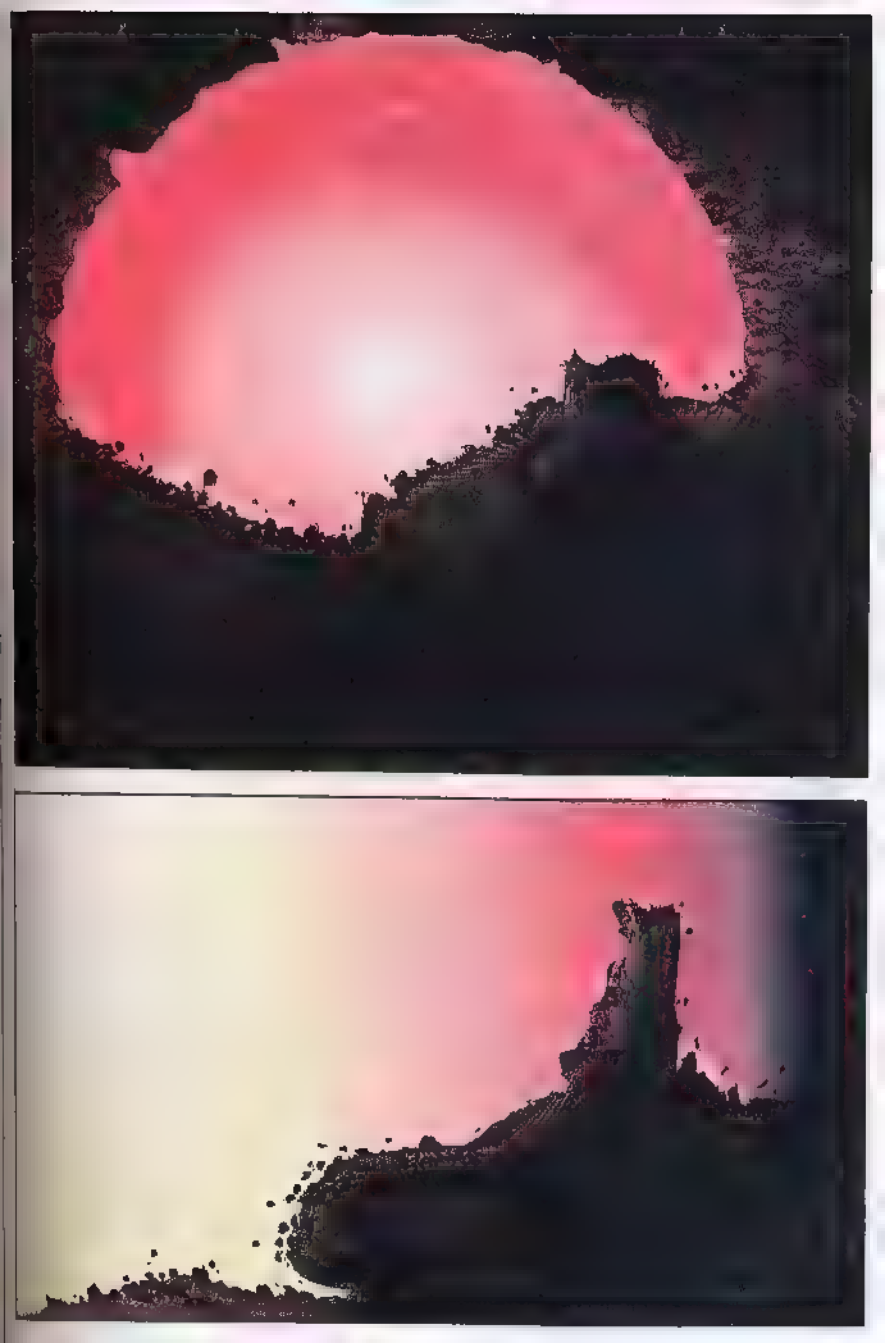
B-BUT I CANNOT DESTROY YOUR TEMPLE...
[illegible] IS HERE, DON'T HESITATE!
DO AS YOU MUST!

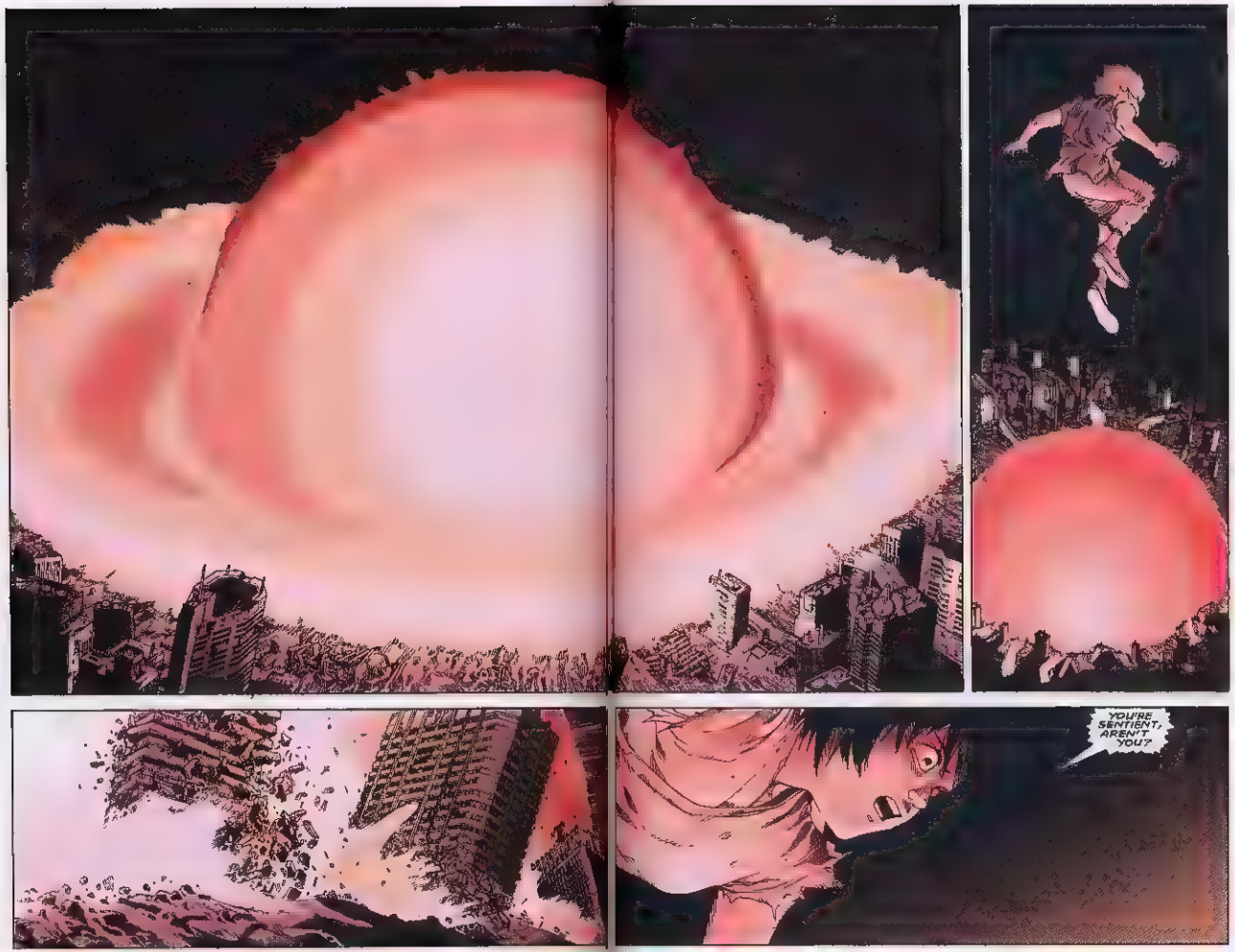

WHAT'S THAT LIGHT IN THE SKY?!
SOMETHING'S COMING!
OOOH!

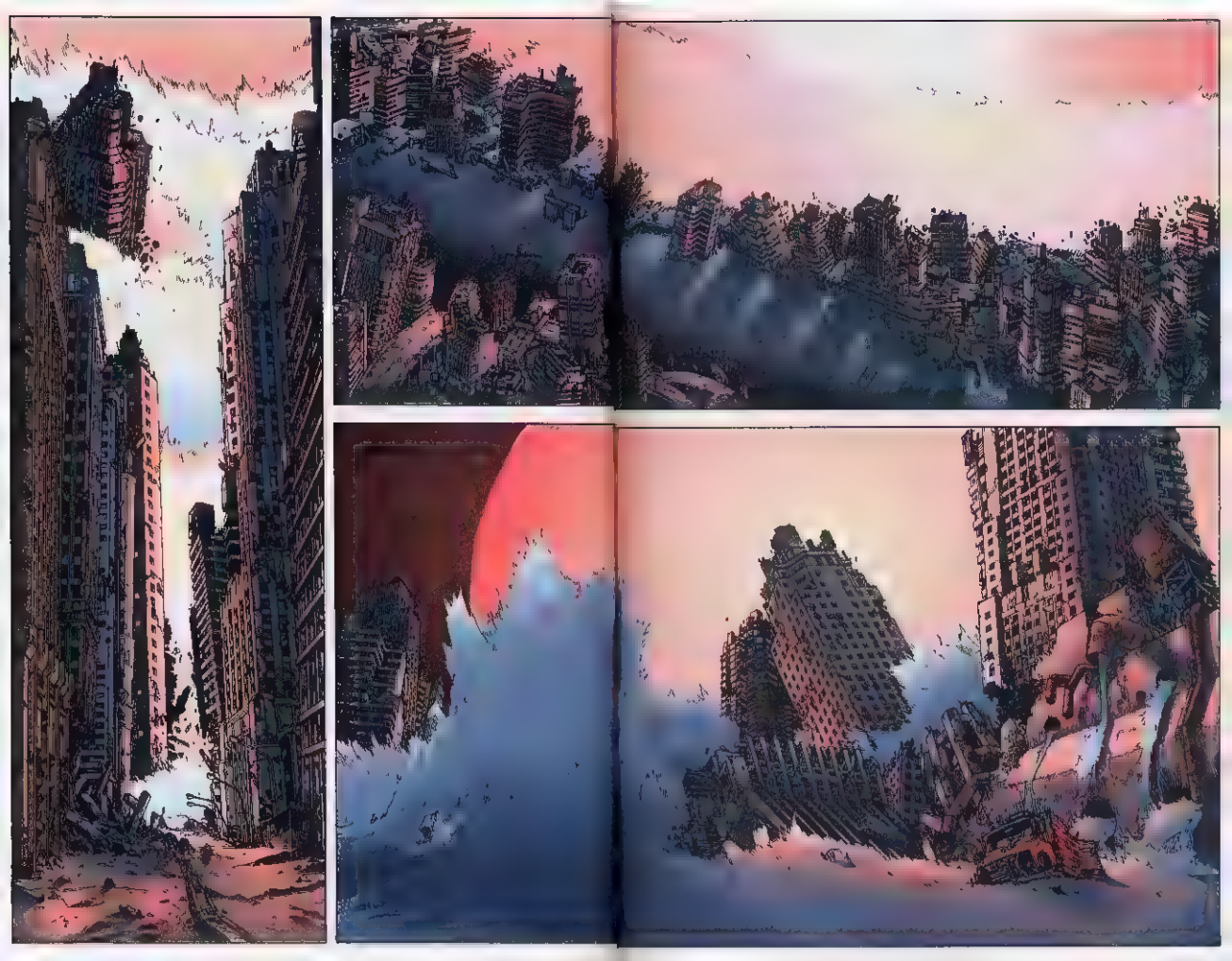

IT MOVED ASIDE!!!

KRAAAK

NOW WHAT?
WHAT'S THAT GLOW?




YOU'RE SENTIENT, AREN'T YOU?

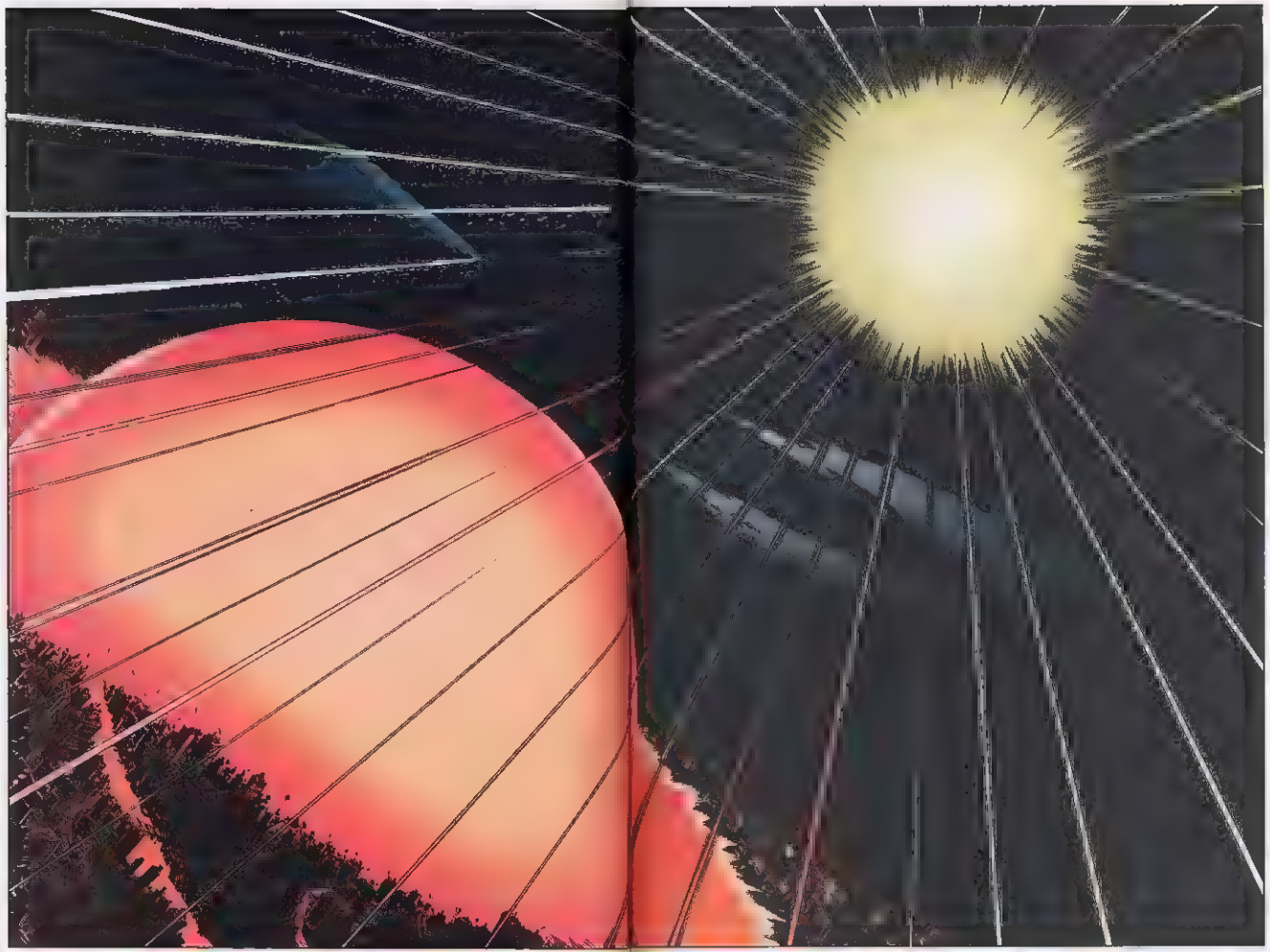


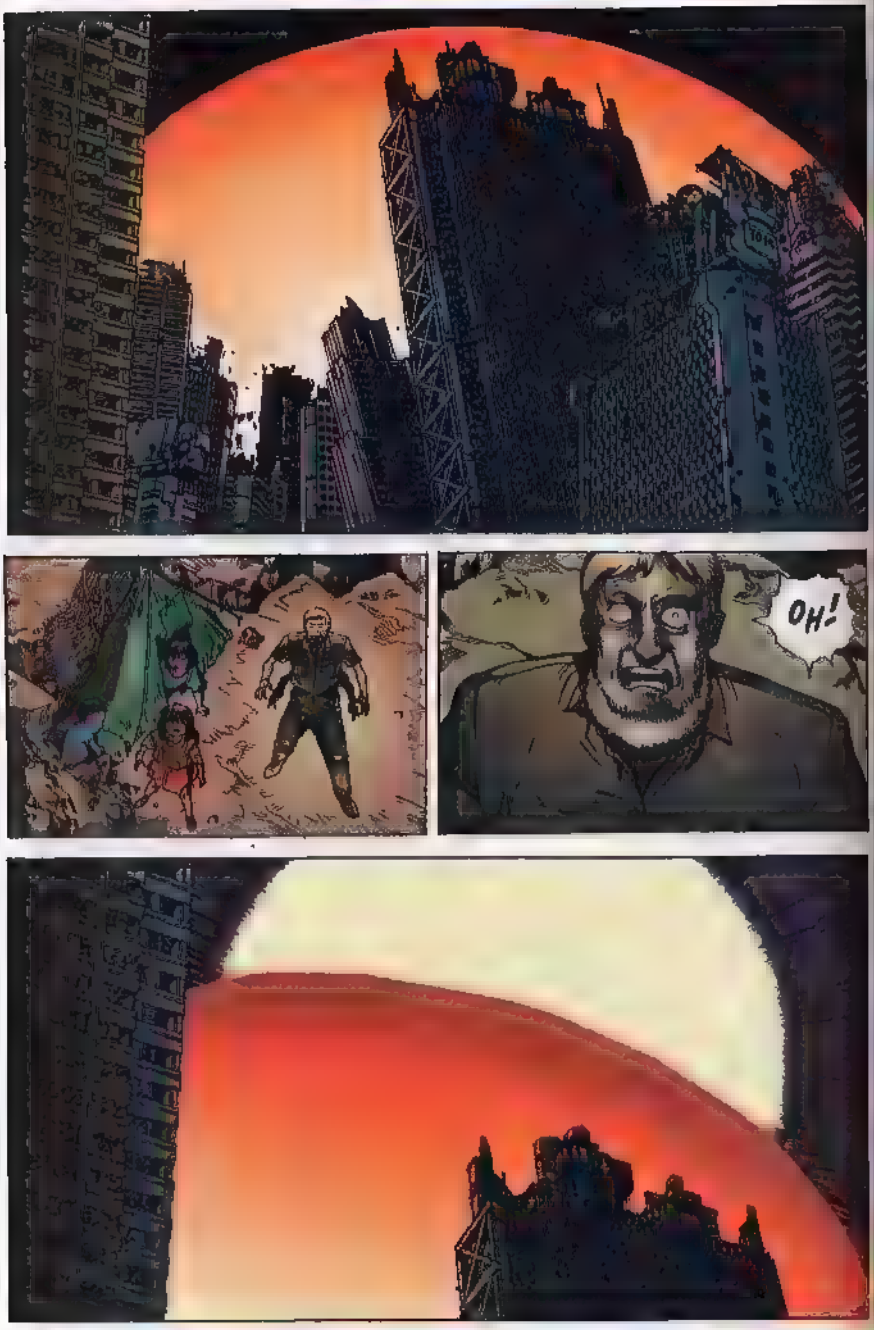
RRUMMBLE

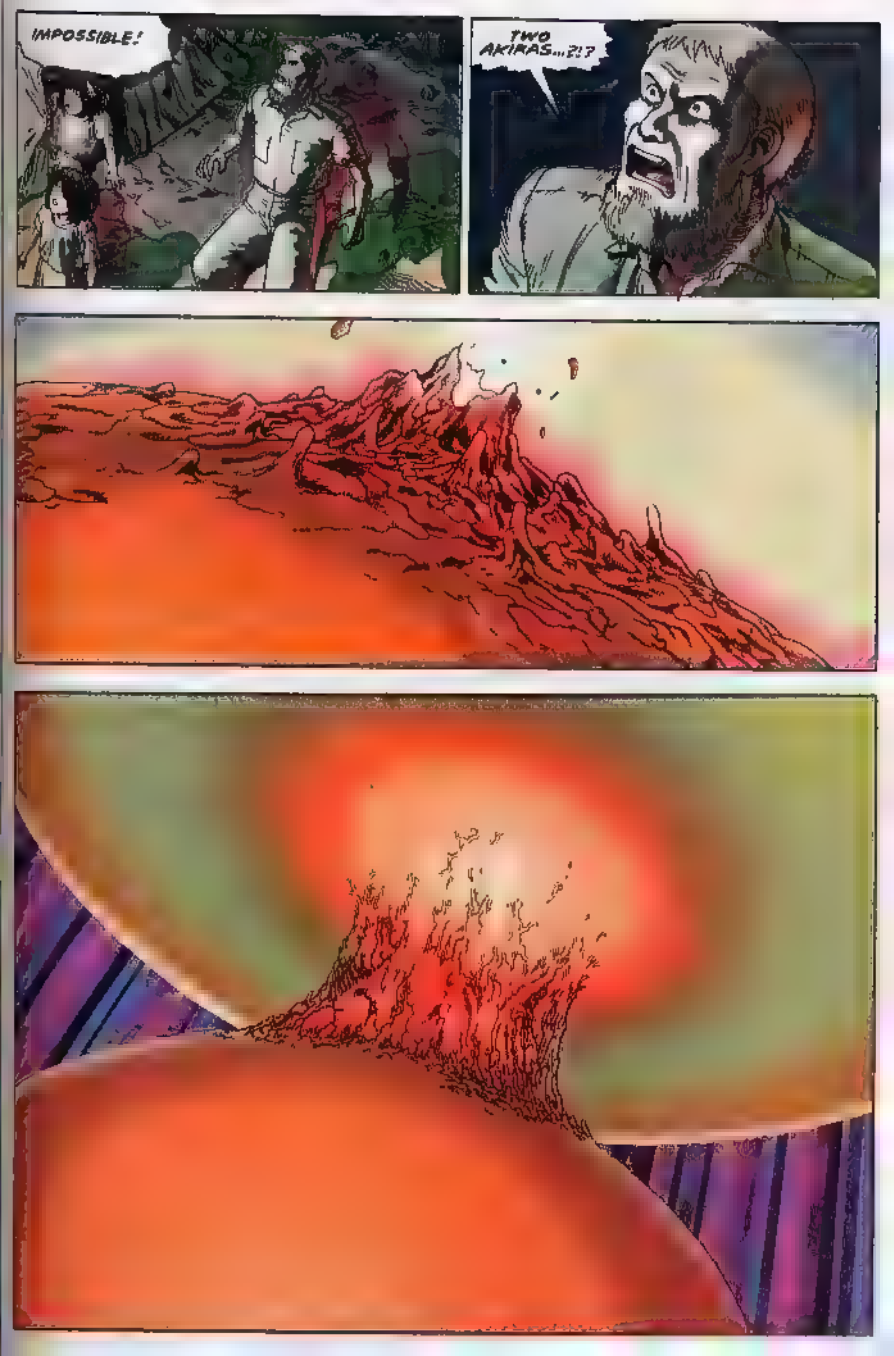
SO...
IT'S BEGUN
GONGONGONG
KRASH
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHIN' BIG IS GOIN' ON.
TETSUO... OR AKIRA?

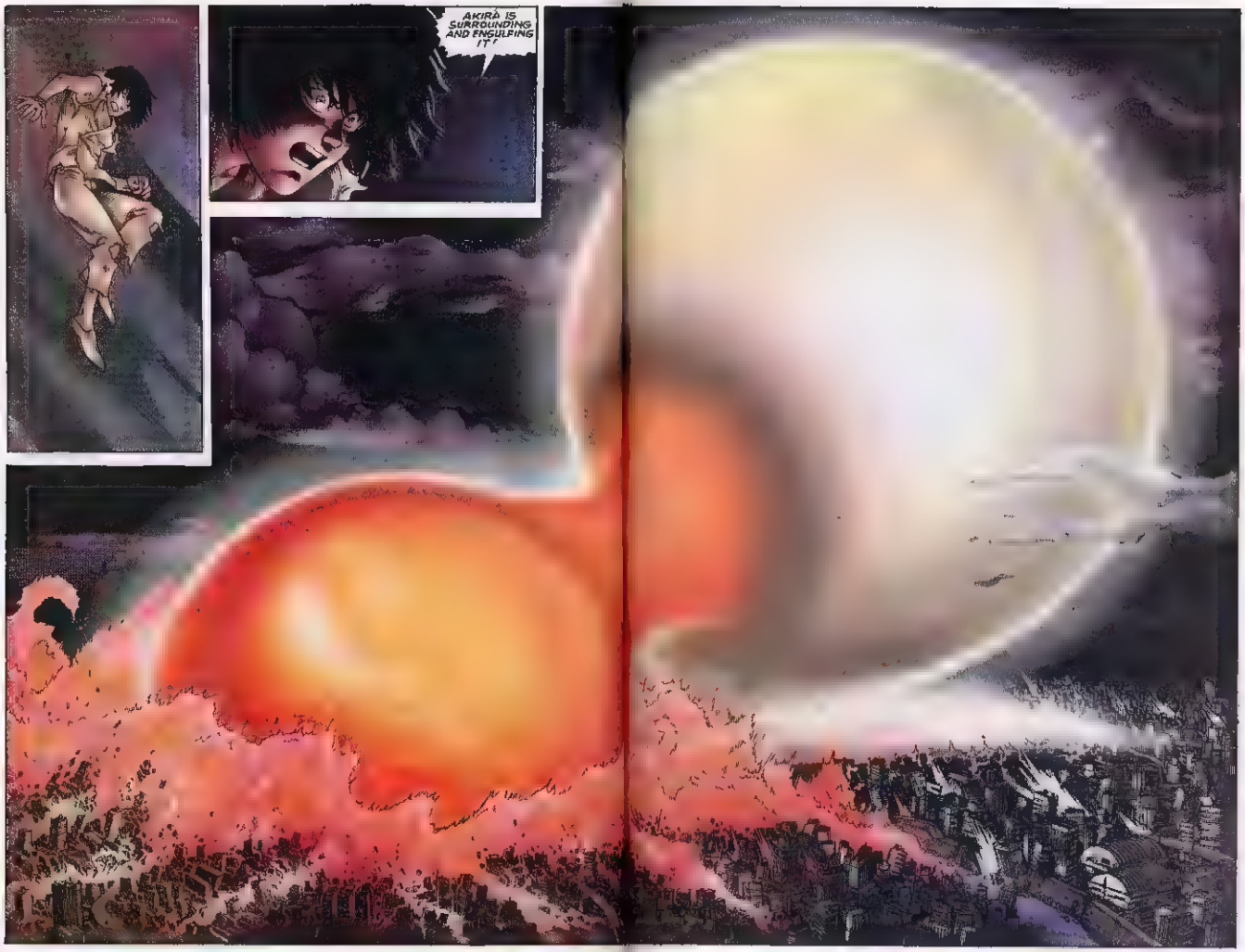
WHAT ABOUT AKIRA?

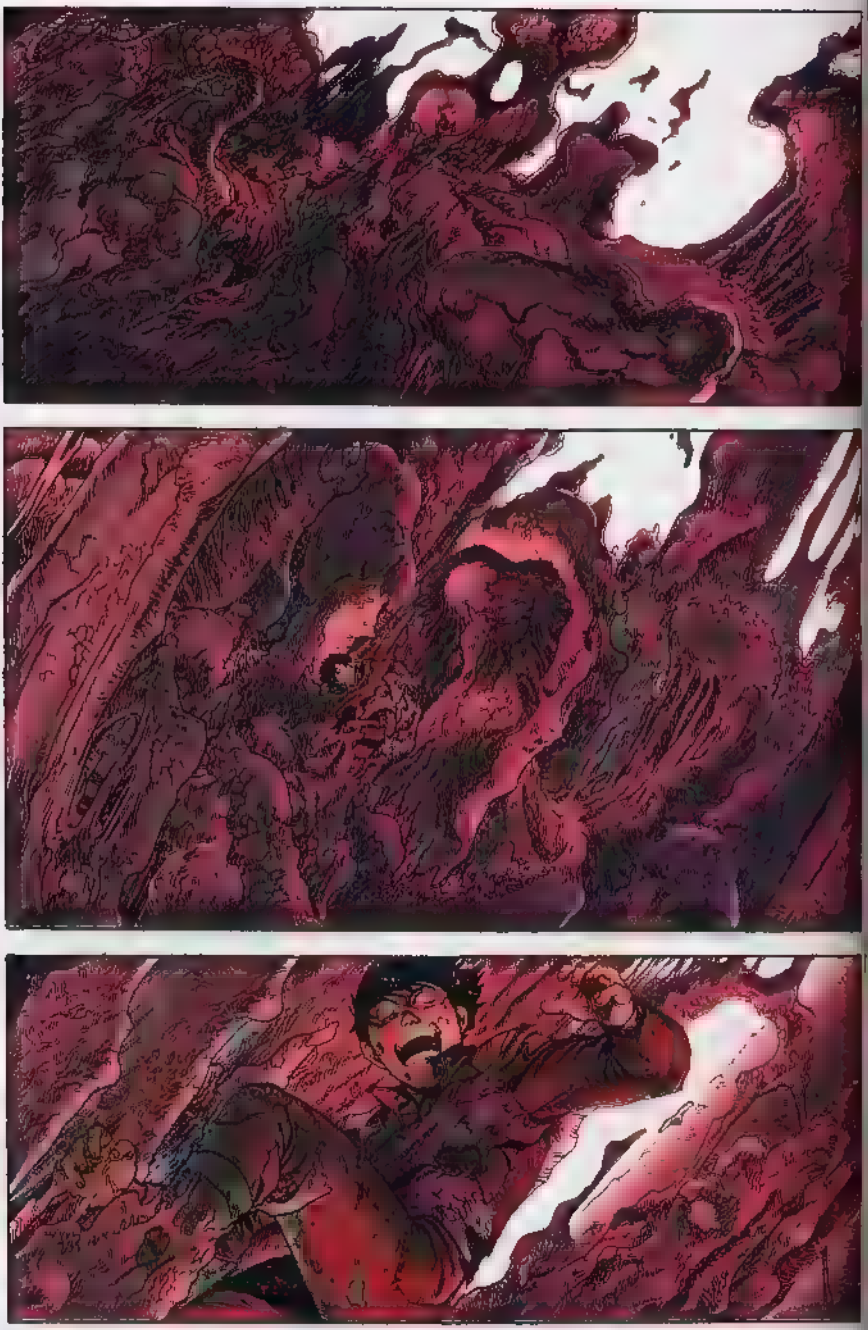
FLASH

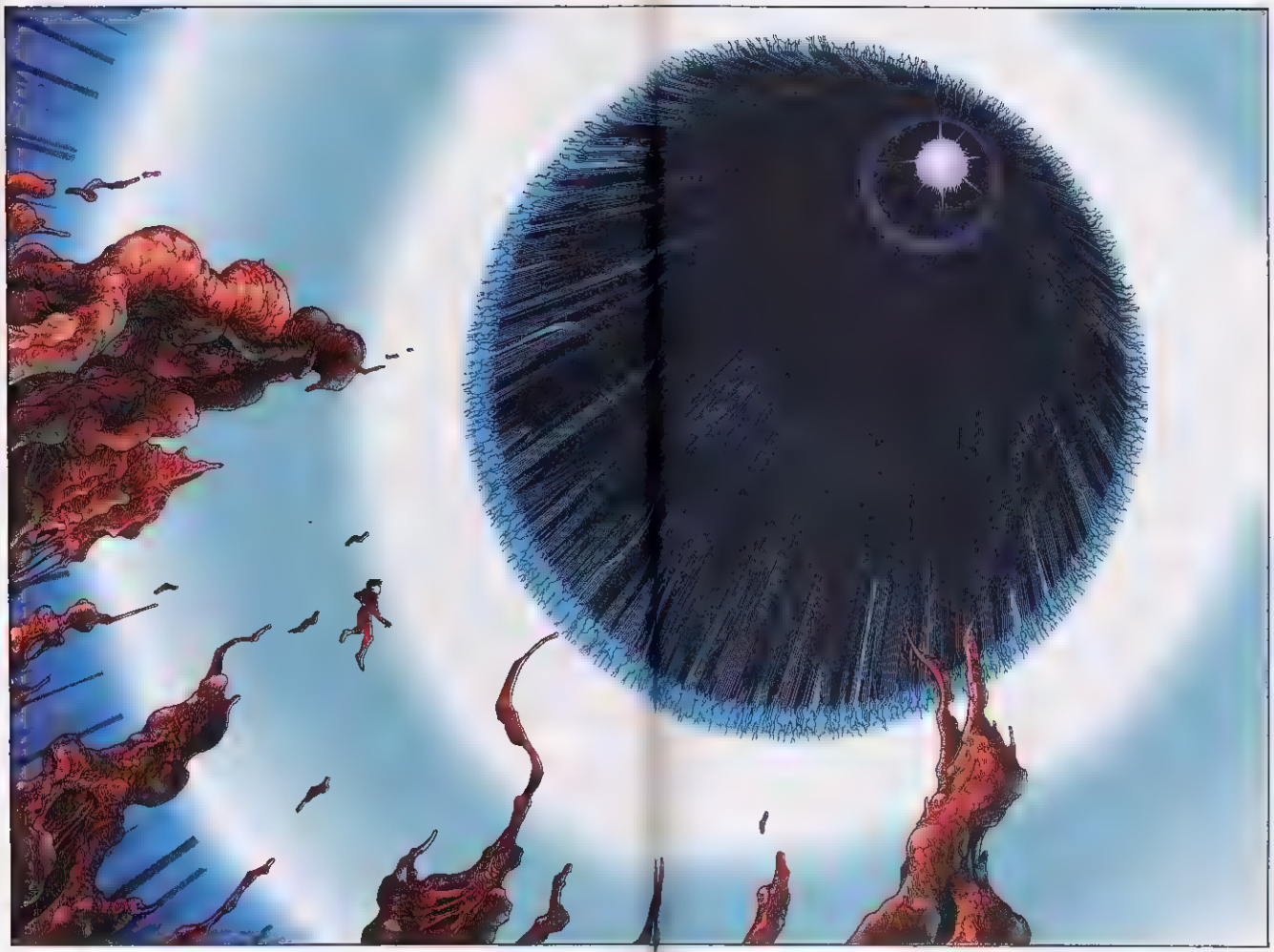



OH!


IMPOSSIBLE!
TWO AKIRAS...?!?


AKIRA IS SURROUNDING AND ENGULFING IT!





UH-OH!

AAAGGH!

TETSUO!!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
KA...OR!!
MONSTER IS THE ONE OF ALL
TETSUO... IS THAT YOU?
KA...
TE...DA...
THIS IS THE TIME.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR
A DREAM
LOOK...
I'VE GOT MY ARM BACK
WE'LL USE PIC 24 GET INTO YOUR GEAR
AMERICAN SOLDIERS HAVE US UNDER ATTACK.
DO YOU SAY IT'S A DREAM?
THIS IS NO DREAM!
TO CONTROL YOUR POWER YOU MUST FIRST MASTER YOUR OWN WEAKNESS.'
PLEASE USE YOUR POWER TO DEFEND US
THIS GAS WAS DEVELOPED THROUGH GENETIC ENGINEERING
WHAT WAS THAT?
AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE
HAHAHAHA!
I
AM HERE
RIGHT!
IF THAT'S WHO IT WAS
HE MAY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ESCAPE THE RESTRAINTS YOU PLACED ON HIM
HIS BODY CAN NO LONGER CONTAIN THE BURGEONING POWER. SO IT SEEKS TO POSSESS A GREATER FORM
AREN'T YOU, KAY?
WHAT ABOUT THE MOON?
I'M NOT ALONE.
WHY DID YOU--?
HUH?
COME ON AND TRY IT, ASSHOLES!
...LOCATED BENEATH THE CONSTRUCTION FOR THE NEW OLYMPIC STADIUM
I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
HAIL, LORD AKIRA!
LORD AKIRA!
YOU CAN READ MY THOUGHTS?
YOU SAW IT TOO.
IT'S A COMPLETE FULLWELL
BY THE TIME HE WAKES, IT WILL BE TOO LATE
I REALIZE NOW HE WAS A HERO TO BOTH OF THEM
ALL OF THIS WILL FADE AWAY.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT AKIRA?
IT'S AN ILLUSION! ALL OF IT!

YAMAGATAAA!
AH YOU'VE COME BACK...
...NUMBER 41!!
POOR LITTLE TETSUO...
YAMAGATA!
YAHUGH!
DON'T SWALLOW THAT PILL!
IT'S A CUSTOM JOB. WANNA TRY IT?
GONNA PARTY TONIGHT!
SINCE WHEN DO YOU GIVE ORDERS HERE?
SAY WHAT?
LET'S RACE THOSE BIKES UNTIL THEY FLY.
FROM HERE ON WE TAKE IT AS IT COMES.
STOP TREATING ME LIKE SUCH A BABY.
YOU'RE STILL JUST A KID
HE TOOK SOME MIND-ALTERING DRUG DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.
STOP FOLLOWING ME EVERYWHERE.
WHILE WE DON'T WANT TO NEGLECT ACADEMICS...
...OUR MAIN GOAL IS THE TEACHING OF RECENT HUMAN VALUES.
HOW'S KIYOKO, MUNAKATA?
HEY, TETSUO. HEADS UP!
AND TETSUO SHIMA WILL BE YOUR NEW FRIEND...
I DON'T WANNA GO!
TETSUO!
NO!
DON'T MAKE ME GO.
HE CRIES AND CRIES TILL I CAN'T STAND IT. IT'S NOT AS THOUGH HE WERE MY REAL CHILD
WHY WON'T DADDY COME AND SEE ME?
:SOB. SOB.:
THE FOOL!

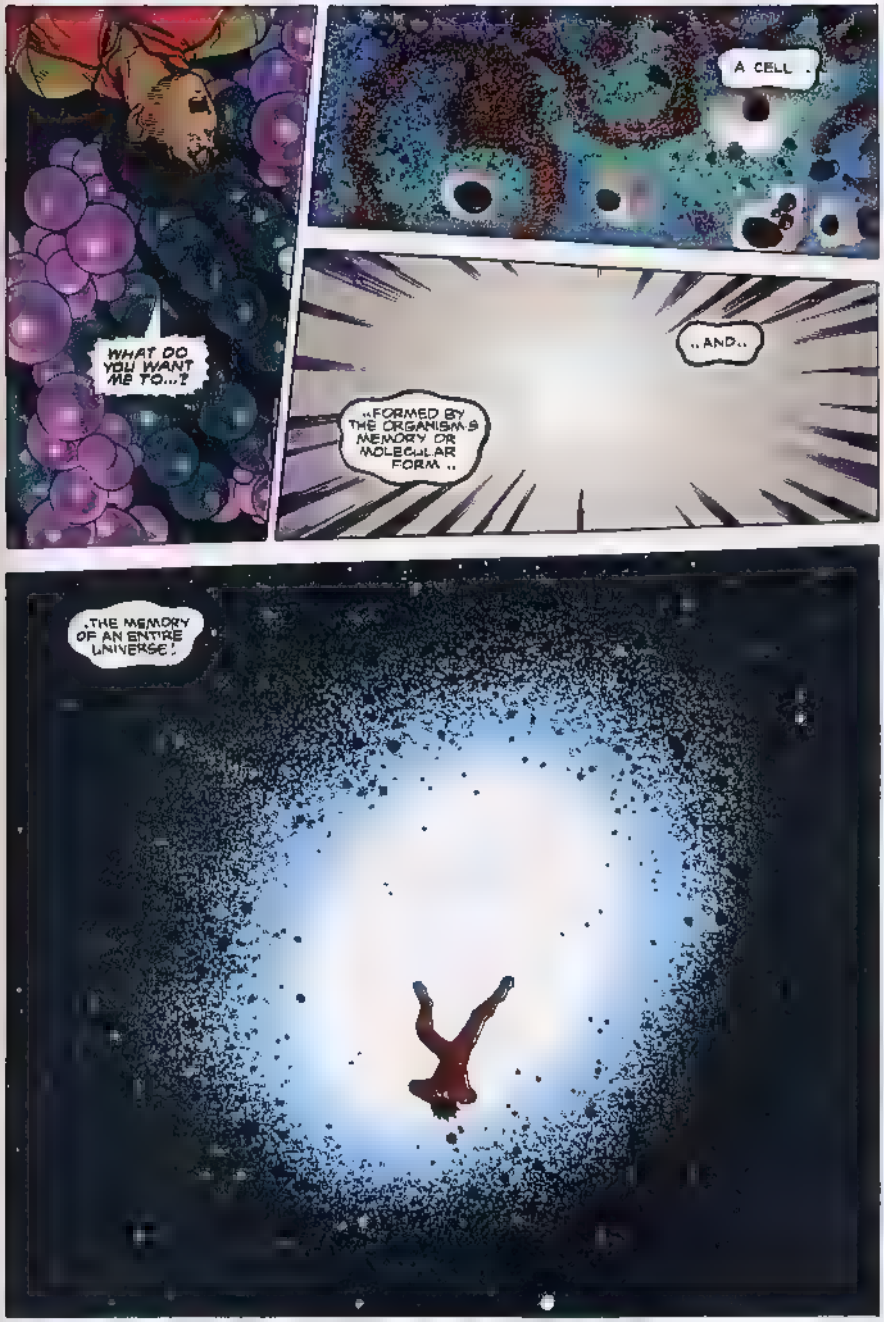
SOB-SOB!
TETSUO...
S ALL TH S...
JUST A DREAM YOU'RE HAVING?
ALL OF HIS LONG-SUPPRESSED FEELINGS AND MEMORIES...
!
...ARE BE NG RELEASED AT LAST!

MIYAKO!
AND YOU ARE A PART OF T A.L.L.
IS TETSUO'S LIFE FLASHING BEFORE HIS EYES? LIKE HE'S GONNA...?
FREED FROM THE SHACKLES OF HIS BODY..
...HIS MIND HAS REACHED A SPIRITUAL PLANE

LOOK INTO THE HEART...

OF LIFE'S MOST PRIMAL MEMORIES

A LIFE FORM THAT HAS GROWN AND DEVELOPED DURING COUNTLESS, REPETITIOUS EONS ..
WOULDN'T YOU AGREE THAT IT HAS EVOLVED IN WAYS..
...THAT ARE FAR BEYOND THAT FOR WHICH MERE HAPPENSTANCE AND CIRCUMSTANCE ALONE COULD ACCOUNT ?


WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO...?
A CELL .
..AND..
..FORMED BY THE ORGANISM'S MEMORY OR MOLECULAR FORM ..
.THE MEMORY OF AN ENTIRE UNIVERSE!

Coming next month:

AKIRA TRIBUTE ISSUE.

Featuring art and stories by creators from the West including Moebius, John Romita, Jo Duffy, Mark Texiera, Larry Hama, Bret Blevins, Warren Ellis, Terry Shoemaker, Kent Williams, John Van Fleet, George Pratt, Alex Toth, Michael Allred, Joe Madureira, Mark Chiarello and Mitch O'Connell.

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MARIE JAVINS
editor

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editor in chief

The end is near, for the signs have come to pass, look, and you may see them, too. In a place dancing with stars, a young girl known as Kay commands a machine that spits down fire born in the sun. A triad of children hovers over the city of Neo-Tokyo, weaving strategies of extraordinary forces. The streets below rumble as mental energies collide with the physical, remaking a world. Cut off from her flock, a leader named Lady Miyako screams of salvation and sacrifice. And inside what was once a boy called Tetsuo, things sinister and spiritual battle for control of a human soul.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

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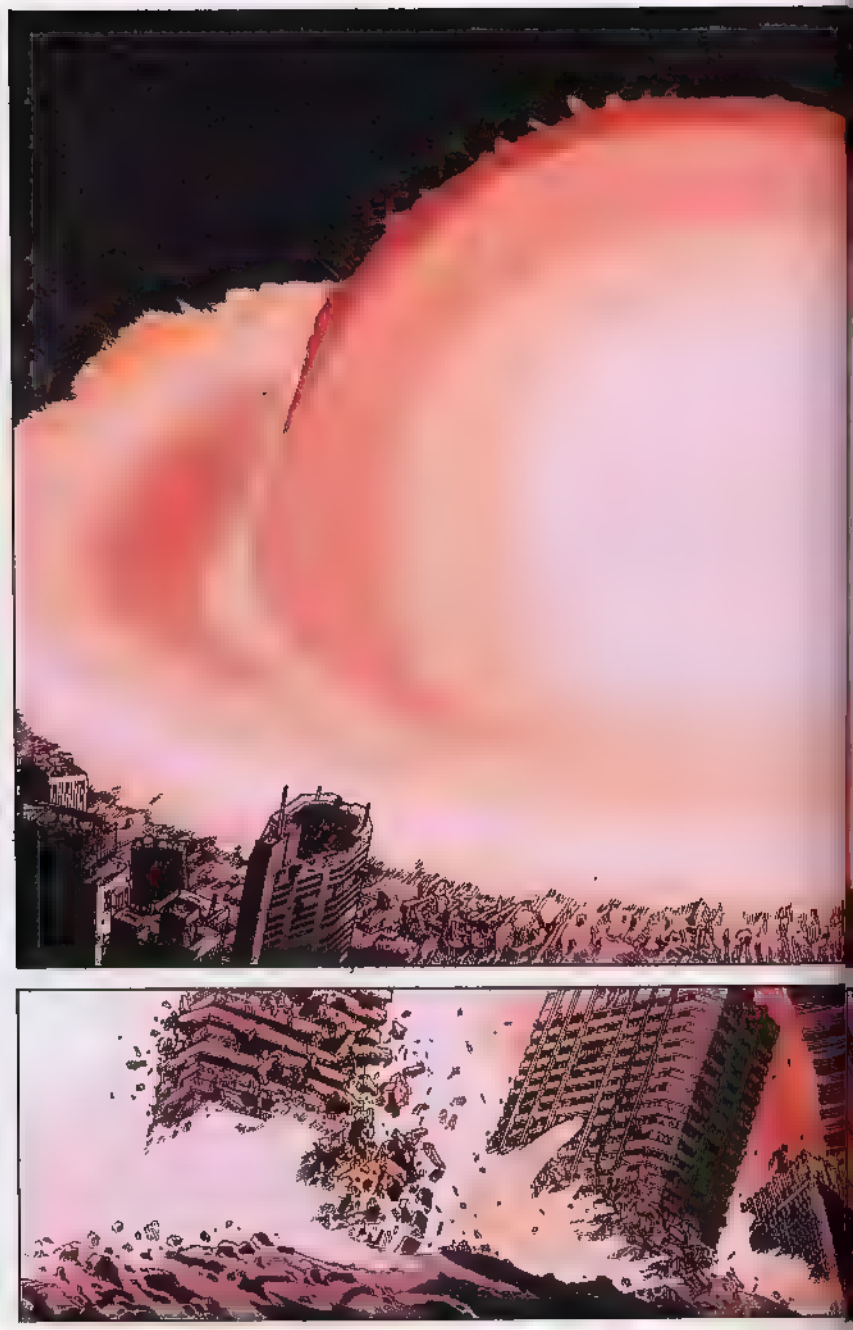
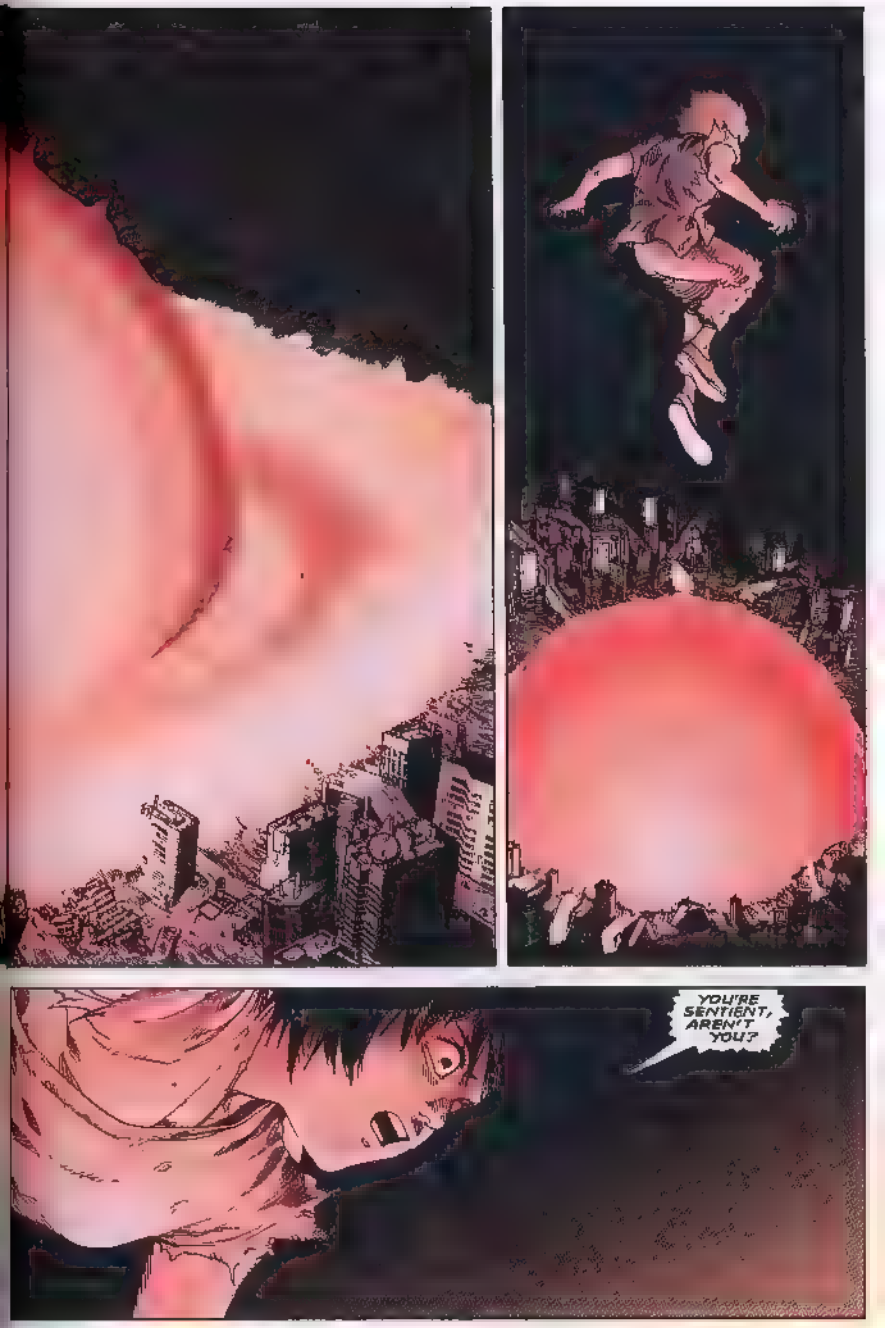
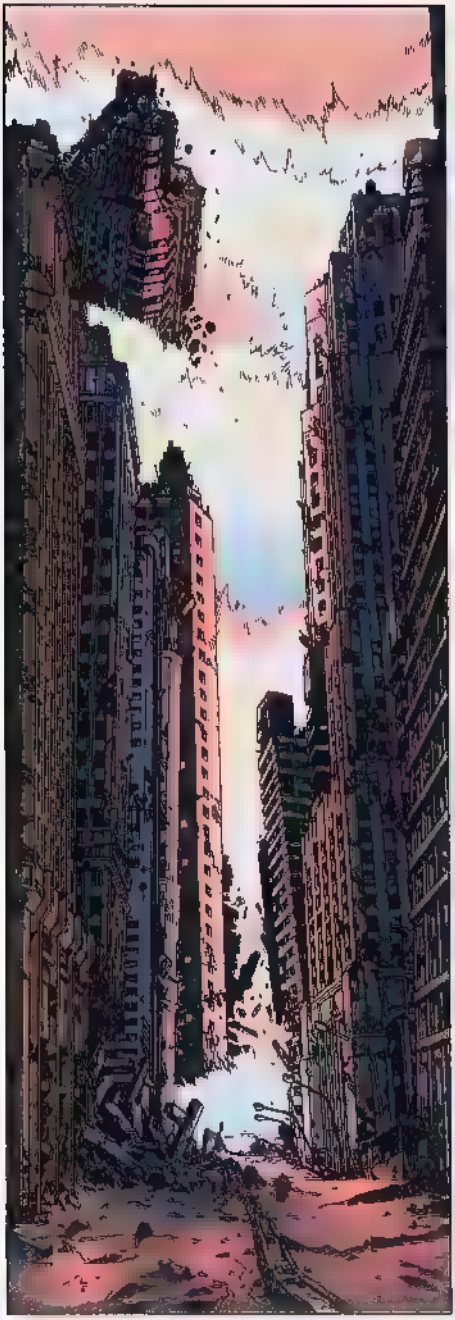
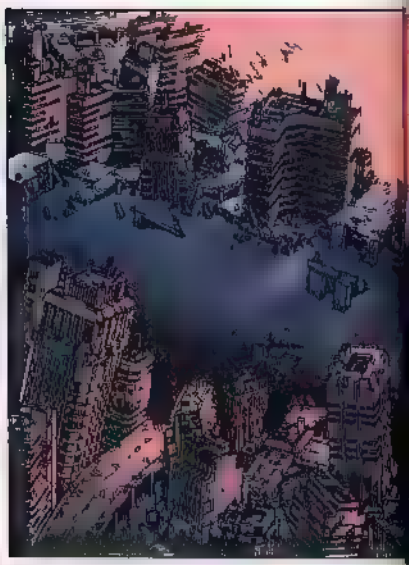
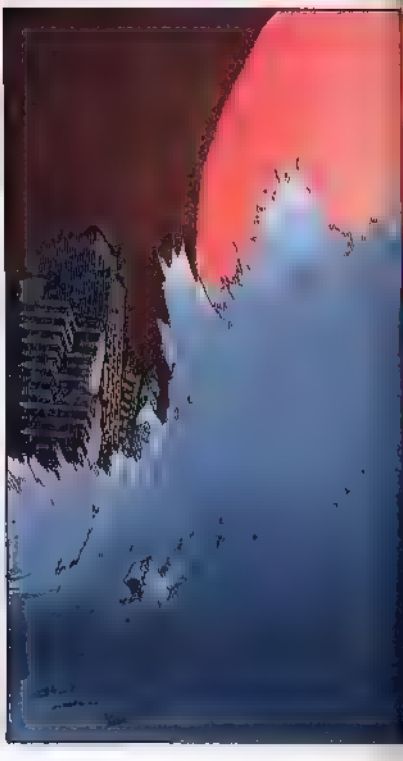
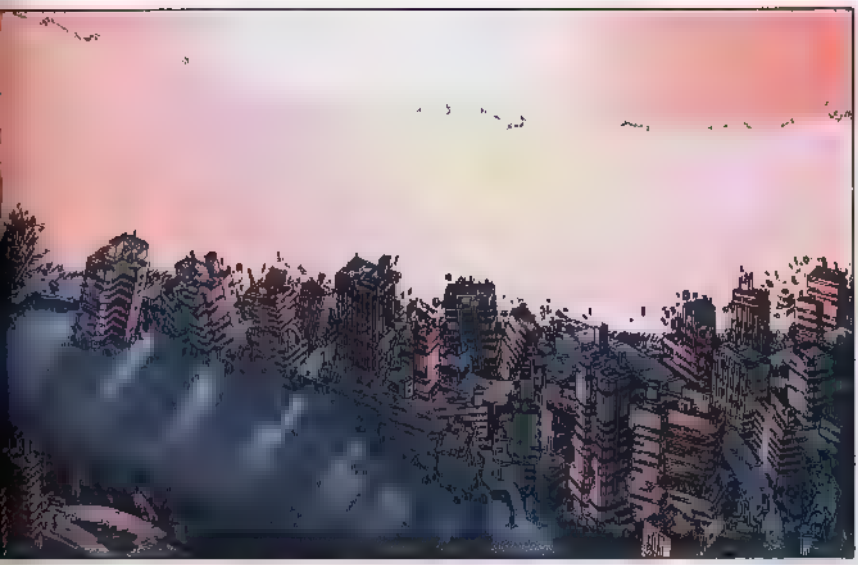


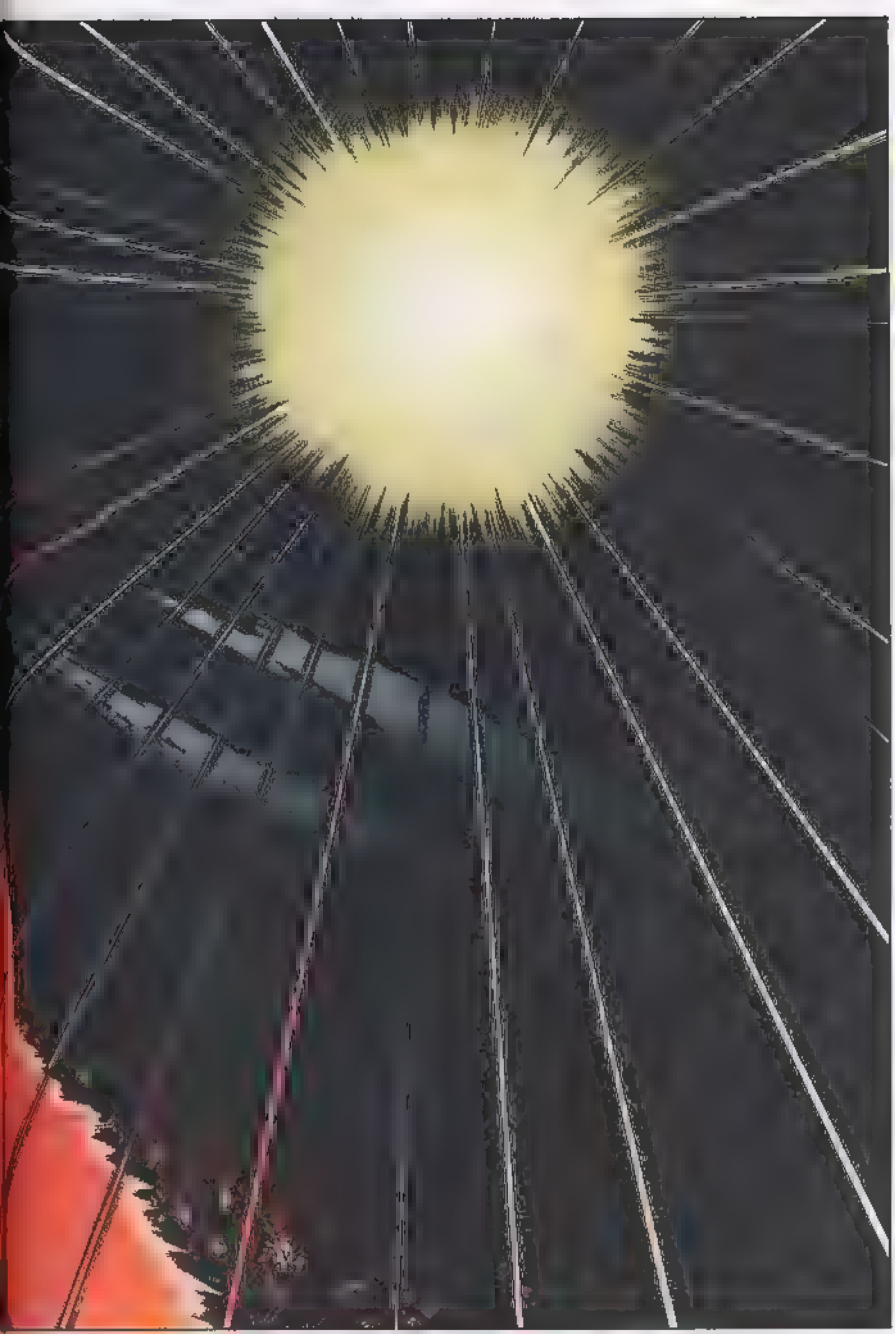

YOU'RE SENTIENT, AREN'T YOU?

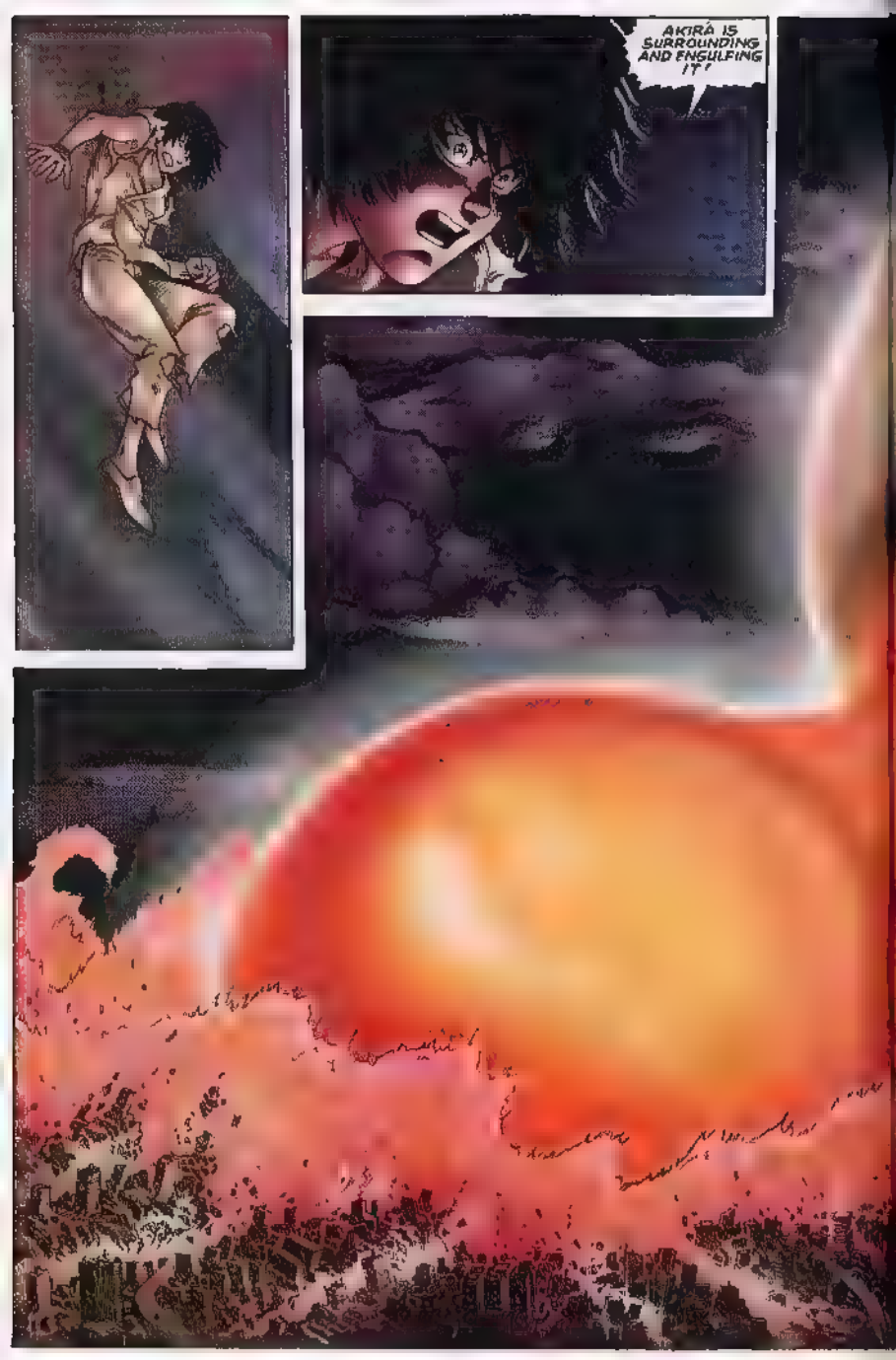


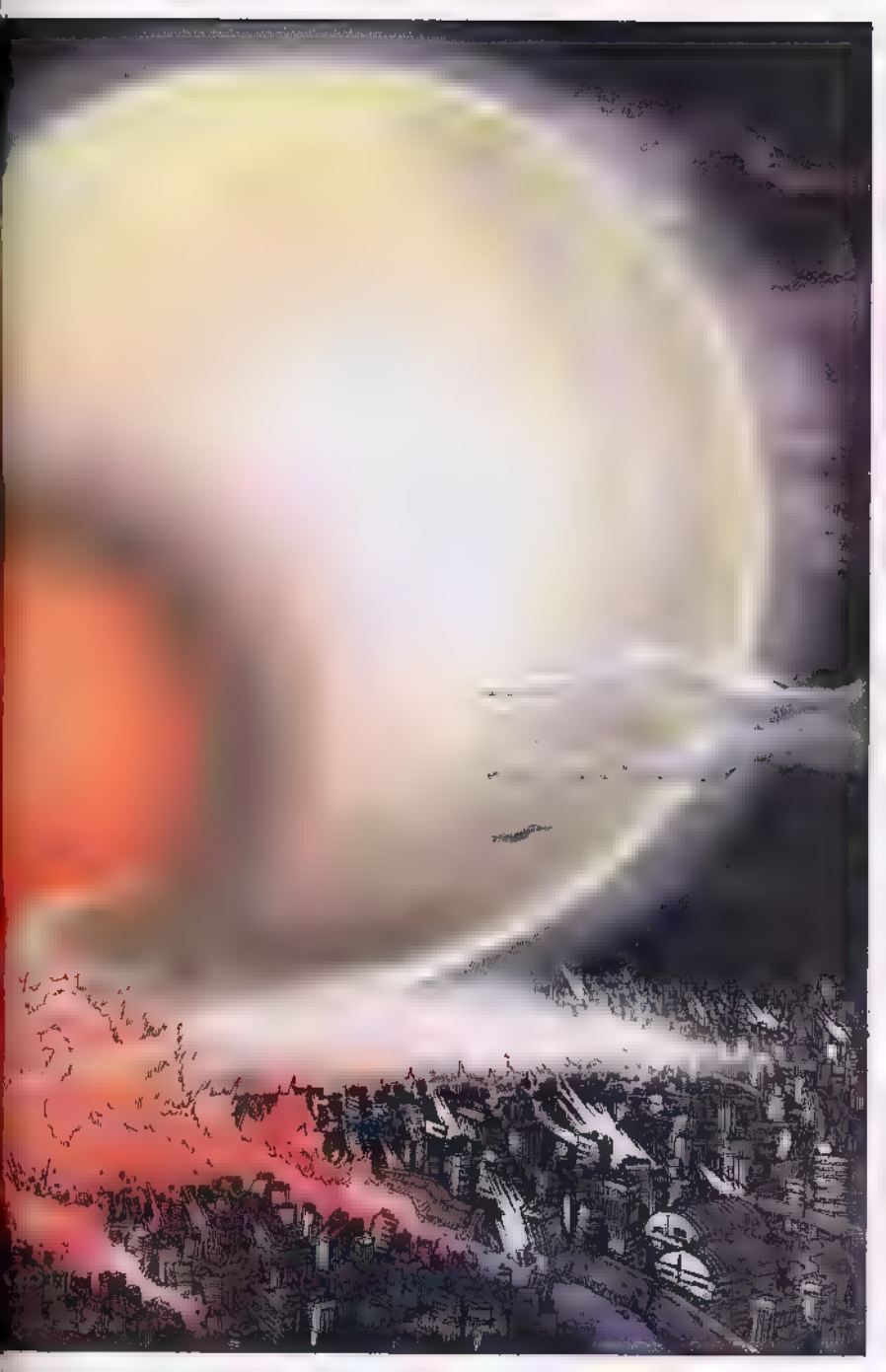


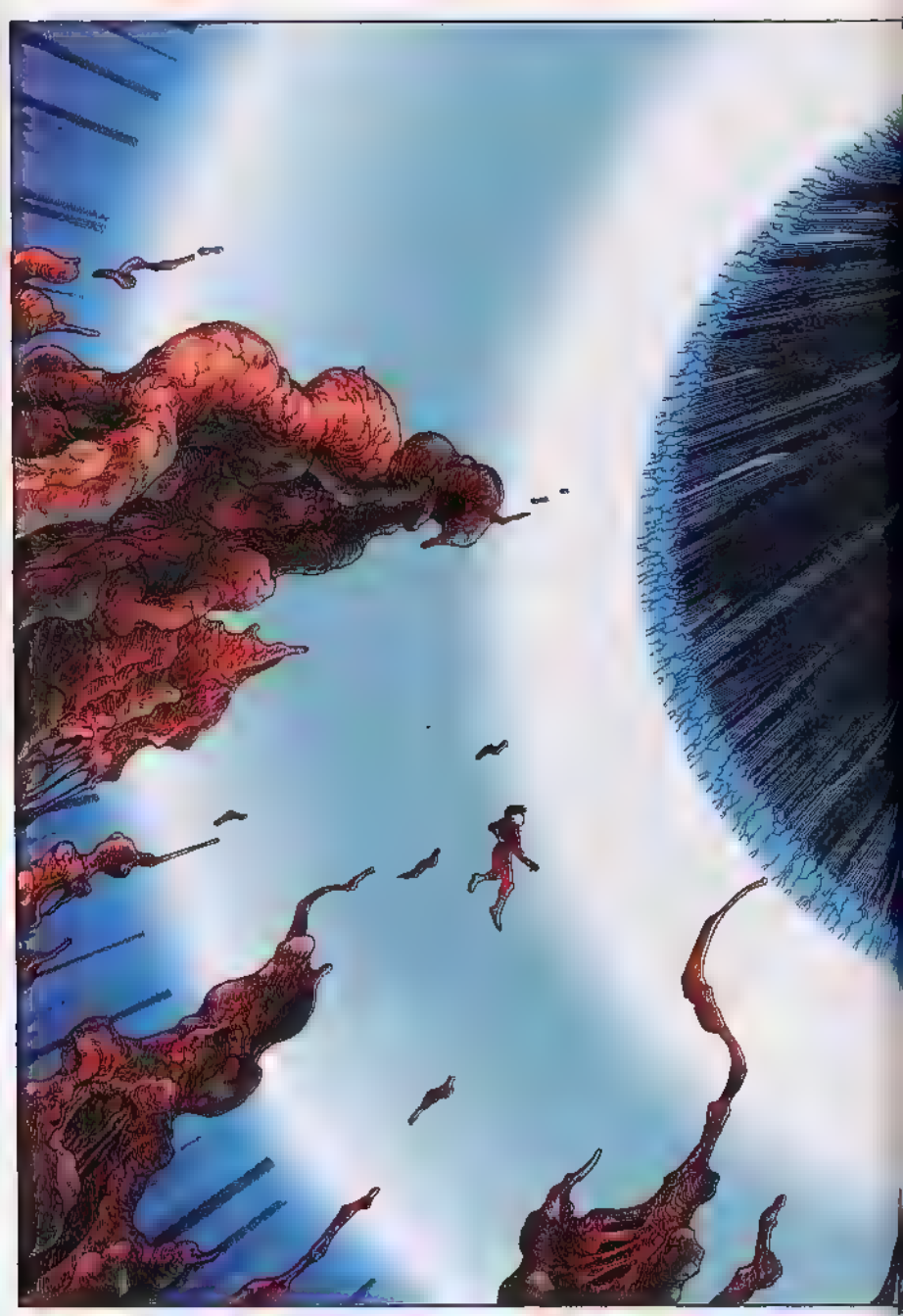







AKIRA IS SURROUNDING AND ENGULFING IT!





TETSUO!!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
KA-OR-!!
...MONSTER IS THE CAR ALL...
TETSUO... IS THAT YOU?
KA...
...NE... OA...
THIS IS THE TIME...
...I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
HURRY!
A DREAM.
LOOK!!!
I'VE GOT MY ARM BACK.
WE'LL USE PIC-24. GET INTO YOUR GEAR.
AMERICAN SOLDIERS HAVE US UNDER ATTACK.
DID YOU SAY IT'S A DREAM?
THIS IS NO DREAM!
TO CONTROL YOUR POWER YOU MUST FIRST MASTER YOUR OWN WEAKNESS.'
PLEASE ...USE YOUR POWER TO DEFEND US!
THIS GAS WAS DEVELOPED THROUGH GENETIC ENGINEERING.
WHAT WAS THAT?
AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE.
HAHHHH AH!
I...
...AM HERE!
DANGER
CAUTION

RIGHT!
IF THAT'S WHO IT WAS...
HE MAY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ESCAPE THE RESTRAINTS YOU PLACED ON HIM.
AREN'T YOU KAY?
HIS BODY CAN NO LONGER CONTAIN THE BURGEONING POWER, SO IT SEEKS TO POSSESS A GREATER FORM.
WHAT ABOUT THE MOON?
WHY DID YOU--?
WHAT --?!
COME ON AND TRY IT, ASSHOLES!
I'M NOT ALONE.
...LOCATED BENEATH THE CONSTRUCTION FOR THE NEW OLYMPIC STADIUM.
NAU, LORD AKIRA!
LORD AKIRA!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
YOU CAN READ MY THOUGHTS?
YOU SAW IT, TOO.
IT'S A COMPLETE FAILURE!
BY THE TIME HE WAKES, IT WILL BE TOO LATE.
I REALIZE NOW HE WAS A HERO TO BOTH OF THEM.
ALL OF THIS WILL FADE AWAY!
SOB! SOB!
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT AKIRA?!
IT'S AN ILLUSION! ALL OF IT!

YAMAGATAAA!
SO YOU'VE COME BACK...
...NUMBER 41?!
POOR LITTLE TETSUO...
YAMAGATA!
YAAUGH!
DON'T SWALLOW THAT PILL!
IT'S A CUSTOM JOB... WANNA TRY IT?
GONNA PARTY TONIGHT!
SAY WHAT?
SINCE WHEN DO YOU GIVE ORDERS HERE?
LET'S RACE THOSE BIKES TILL THEY FLY!
FROM HERE ON WE TAKE IT AS IT COMES.
STOP TREATING ME LIKE SUCH A BABY!
YOU'RE STILL JUST A KID.
HE TOOK SOME MIND-ALTERING DRUG DURING THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

STOP FOLLOWING ME EVERY-WHERE!
WHILE WE DON'T WANT TO NEGLECT ACADEMICS...
...OUR MAIN GOAL IS THE TEACHING OF DECENT HUMAN VALUES.
YOUR FIRST TIME, HUH?
HEY, TETSUO! HEADS UP!
AND TETSUO SHIMA WILL BE YOUR NEW FRIEND...
TETSUO!
NO!
DON'T MAKE ME GO!
I DON'T WANNA GOOO!
HE CRIES AND CRIES TILL I CAN'T STAND IT. IT'S NOT AS THOUGH HE WERE MY REAL CHILD.
WHY WON'T DADDY COME AND SEE ME?
THE FOOL!
SOB-SOB!